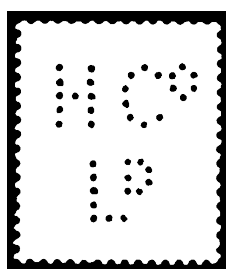


HAVE YOU HEARD OF HORSEHAY?

Roy Gault

Every now and again, while sorting through perfin, an unusual postmark is chanced upon. A godsend when trying to assign a suspected user to a loose stamp. In this case it was **Horsehay**, which I vaguely associated with Shropshire - since confirmed in my Gazetteer as being 'just west of Dawley'. The perfin involved is "HC^o/L^d," (H1590.03), for which I have just nine examples. Four of them have legible postmarks, all reading Horsehay (or at least in part).

1905-1936



H1590.03

A quick telephone call to **John Nelson** soon established that the only contender for the user was 'The Horsehay Co Ltd', Engineers, and Ironfounders, Horsehay, Shropshire. But is the die rare? Well I suspect not, but I do have a gap in the perfin record between 1910 and 1930.

A search of the web has yielded the following:

The 'Horsehay Works' was established as early as 1755 by Abraham Darby II, when he built a blast furnace on the site. Much later on, in 1886, the 'Horsehay Works' was purchased by the 'Horsehay Co', a partnership between two Simpson brothers. They expanded the heavy engineering side of the business to include the manufacture of girders, roofs, and bridges. Notably, in the early 1900's the 'Sentinel' steam wagon was developed at Horsehay, and by 1913 (now a limited company) they also specialized in the manufacture of gas plant equipment. In its heyday, the works was large enough to warrant the use of two industrial steam locomotives, but disposed of in the 1950's.

However, sometime after 1945 the company was taken over by the Adamson Alliance Co Ltd, and the works re-organised to build heavy cranes. It was while under the tenure of Adamson-Butterley Ltd, that the works closed in 1986, thus ending a 230 year engineering reign.

Another die (#25) for Brian Atkins's Salopian List!